



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

NAVAL SEA SYSTEMS COMMAND
2531 JEFFERSON DAVIS HWY
ARLINGTON VA 22242-5160

IN REPLY REFER TO

5090
Ser 00T/003
6 January 2000

MEMORANDUM

From: NAVSEA 00T
To: NAVSEA PMS 334

Subj: FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR DONATION OF THE
EX-NEW JERSEY

Ref: (a) PMS 333 Memo Ser 333B/0017 6 Jan 00
(b) OPNAVINST 5090.1B, Change 2, 9 Sep 99

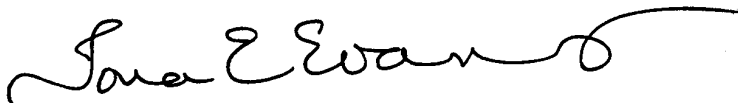
Encl: (1) Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

1. An Environmental Assessment (EA) for the subject action was forwarded by reference (a) for review in accordance with reference (b). It has been determined that preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required.

Accordingly, it is considered that, with implementation of the following paragraph and any mitigation measures described in enclosure (1), compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act has been effected and, in this regard, the project may be initiated.

2. The Council on Environmental Quality regulations require public notification of the availability of the EA and of the decision not to prepare an EIS. Enclosure (1) should be provided to local newspapers for publication and mailed to interested parties. Please provide verification of local newspaper publication to NAVSEA 00TP upon implementation. The EA should be retained in project files for possible future use.

3. Questions regarding this FONSI may be directed to Deborah Verderame, NAVSEA 00TP, at (703) 602-4060 X251, DSN 332, or email to: VerderameDH@navsea.navy.mil.


Iona E. Evans
By direction

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL SEA SYSTEMS COMMAND

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) FOR THE DONATION OF THE
BATTLESHIP EX-NEW JERSEY (BB 62)**

Pursuant to section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Council of Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508) implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA, the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), of the Department of the Navy gives notice that an Environmental Assessment has been prepared for donation of the Battleship ex-NEW JERSEY (BB 62). Based on this assessment an environmental impact statement is not required for the proposed action.

The proposed action is for the Navy to transfer ownership of the ex-NEW JERSEY to a non-profit organization that will maintain the vessel in the State of New Jersey for static display as a public museum and memorial. Following transfer the donee's actions will include: 1) constructing and/or modifying waterfront facilities and infrastructure; 2) conducting new dredging and/or maintenance dredging to provide sufficient draft and navigational access; 3) performing ship transportation and mooring activities required for the relocation from the present Naval Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility (NISMF), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania berthing site to the selected permanent berthing site; 4) establishing, operating and maintaining the ex-NEW JERSEY as a public museum and memorial; 5) performing maintenance as required to maintain the ex-NEW JERSEY in appropriate condition.

The proposed action will comply with the requirements established by Public Law (P.L) 105-261, section 1012; that the Secretary of the Navy strike the U.S.S. NEW JERSEY (BB-62) from the Naval Vessel Register and transfer the vessel to a non-profit entity within the State of New Jersey.

The Navy typically considers scrapping and recycling when evaluating options for the disposition of vessels stricken from the Navy Vessel Register. Because of the historical significance of the ex-NEW JERSEY and the legal requirement that the Navy donate the vessel, scrapping the ex-NEW

JERSEY was determined by the Navy not to be a viable alternative.

A "no action" alternative was considered. The "no action" alternative would be for the Secretary to decline to donate the ex-NEW JERSEY to either of the current applicants and retain it in the inactive fleet at NISMF Philadelphia until the solicitation is repeated and a suitable donee found. The "no action" alternative would be temporary because the requirement by P.L. 105-261 for the Secretary of Navy to donate the ship is non-discretionary.

As the result of an open solicitation for donation applicants, the Navy received two applications; one from the USS NEW JERSEY Battleship Commission and one from the Homeport Alliance for the USS NEW JERSEY. These organizations proposed to establish a permanent berth for the ex-NEW JERSEY at the Military Ocean Terminal, Bayonne (MOTBY) and the Camden Waterfront, Camden, respectively. No significant environmental impacts were determined for the donation of the ex-NEW JERSEY to either of these organizations.

For both cases, permanent berthing of the ex-NEW JERSEY and the establishment and operation of a museum and memorial is consistent with historic and present land use. Assessment of effects to infrastructure at the alternate berthing locations indicates that there is adequate existing or planned infrastructure (roads/highways, public transportation, parking, water/sewer and utilities) to handle the requirements associated with the establishment of the ex-NEW JERSEY museum and memorial.

As a highly decorated warship and recognized historical asset, the ex-NEW JERSEY is eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. A "Nomination of the Battleship" has been reviewed and approved by the New Jersey State Review Board for Historic Sites. Consequently, the ex-NEW JERSEY will be listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places on transfer to New Jersey waters. At that time, the nomination will be forwarded to the Keeper of the National Register for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Navy issued a no adverse effects determination for the proposed action to the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and is awaiting formal concurrence. The donation contract transferring ownership of the ex-NEW JERSEY to the donee

will require that the donee not undertake any construction, alteration, or modification that would alter the character-defining historic features of the ex-NEW JERSEY without prior permission of the Navy, in consultation with the New Jersey SHPO.

The environmental assessment indicates that there will be no significant impact to aquatic resources at either proposed location. Dredging will be necessary to berth the ex-NEW JERSEY at either location, and will be performed by the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) or by the donee in accordance with permits issued by the ACOE and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). Further assessment of potential impacts to the aquatic environment will be addressed during acquisition of a NJDEP Waterfront Development Permit/Water Quality Certificate. This combined permit details the steps necessary for the donee to comply with all relevant aspects of the New Jersey Coastal Management Program as determined by the NJDEP. Based upon available information provided by the applicants, the Navy will be able to make a Consistency Determination for either site. The environmental assessment indicates that there will not be any direct discharges from the ex-NEW JERSEY or associated structures at either location.

The Environmental Assessment (EA) shows that there will be no impact to Federally or State listed threatened or endangered species, wetlands, or critical habitats.

The Navy is not required to issue a Conformity Determination for the Proposed Action under section 176 of the Clean Air Act. Construction activities, associated with the pier and visitor center, will result in the emission of minor amounts of air pollutants. Such emissions will be limited to the construction phase of the proposed action. Initial preparation of the ex-NEW JERSEY for display (cleaning, stripping and painting, etc) will result in increased volatile organic carbon (VOC) emissions. Air emissions from routine periodic maintenance activities performed following the initial preparation of the ex-NEW JERSEY for display are expected to be insignificant. Finally, the proposed action will result in increased vehicle traffic to the site. The selected applicant will be required to comply with all applicable Federal, state and local air regulations during all phases of the proposed action.


The evaluation of economic effects on the alternate berthing locations indicates a net positive effect for both sites. The museum and memorial will be a tourist attraction, and is expected to spur commercial development catering to the increased tourism, primarily in the retail trade and services sector, and should also generate increased employment and tax revenues. Moreover, new employment opportunities will be created by the construction and operation of the museum and memorial.

With respect to Executive Order 12898, Federal Action to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, the direct and indirect effects of the proposed action (at either location), are not expected to cause disproportionate adverse environmental impacts to any groups or individuals from minority or low-income populations residing in the area.

The proposed action, at either location, complies with the letter and intent of Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks.

Based on the information gathered during the preparation of the EA for the donation of the ex-NEW JERSEY, the Navy finds that the donation of the ex-NEW JERSEY to a non-profit organization that will maintain the vessel in the state of New Jersey for static display as a public museum and memorial will not have significant impacts or reasonably foreseeable cumulative impacts on the natural or man-made environment. The EA and this Finding of No Significant Impact may be obtained from: Department of the Navy, Naval Sea Systems Command, 2531 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22242 ATTN: Ms. Deborah Verderame, Code 00TP Telephone: (703) 602-4060 ext. 251, Facsimile: (703) 602-7213 The EA and Finding of No Significant Impact may also be viewed on the Navy Donation Program Website at www.navsea.navy.mil/ndp.

6 Jan 00
Date


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Director, Environmental
Protection & Occupational
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Naval Sea Systems Command